

Regarding SB 972
Hearing 23 February 2023

My Testimony (Vicky Sigworth)

As a family, we have been so grateful to live in Hamden, and in proximity to New Haven, where many police officers have received the excellent CIT training. In both towns our son has, over the years, had several police encounters while in a mental health crisis, and each time the police were very wise in being able to appropriately deescalate the situation, even as our son needed hospitalization.

However, I also teach NAMI's Family to Family class and run a NAMI support group. From families in other towns without CIT training, I have heard horror stories about their loved ones' near tragic and exceedingly traumatizing encounters with untrained police officers. We desperately need CIT training throughout Connecticut. Just because we may live in a CIT trained town, that does not mean our loved ones may not get in trouble in a town not trained. And those in untrained towns deserve the much better treatment which those of us in trained towns receive. Thank you for your support of this very important program. The State police also desperately need this training, as they have in the past handled mental health crises with tragic consequences. Trainings for police to better interact with the deaf, blind, hearing impaired, physically disabled and for those on the autism spectrum are also essential.

Sincerely,

Vicky Sigworth
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